

REMARKS

Claims 22-69 are pending in the Application. Claims 22-29, 31-49, 51-65, and 67-69 were rejected and claims 30, 50, and 66 were objected to in the Office action mailed September 14, 2010. Claims 22, 35, and 51 are amended and claims 27, 29, 30, 50, and 66 are cancelled by this response. Claims 22, 35, and 51 are independent claims from which claims 23-26, 28, 31-34, and 67, claims 36-49 and 68, and claims 52-65 and 69 depend, respectively. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of pending claims 22-26, 28, 31-49, 51-65, and 67-69, in light of the remarks set forth below.

The Applicants note that a goal of patent examination is to provide a prompt and complete examination of a patent application.

It is **essential** that patent applicants obtain a prompt yet complete examination of their applications. Under the principles of compact prosecution, each claim should be reviewed for compliance with every statutory requirement for patentability in the initial review of the application, even if one or more claims are found to be deficient with respect to some statutory requirement. Thus, USPTO personnel should state all reasons and bases for rejecting claims in the first Office action. Deficiencies should be explained clearly, particularly when they serve as a basis for a rejection. Whenever practicable, USPTO personnel should indicate how rejections may be overcome and how problems may be resolved. **A failure to follow this approach can lead to unnecessary delays in the prosecution of the application.**

M.P.E.P. § 2106(II) (emphasis added).

As such, the Applicants assume, based on the goals of patent examination noted above, that the current Office action sets forth “all reasons and bases” for rejecting the claims.

Amendments to Claims

Claims 22, 35, and 51 have been amended as shown above, to include the subject matter of dependent claims 27, 29, and 30, dependent claim 50, and dependent claim 66, respectively. Applicants respectfully submit that these amendments do not add new matter. Claims 27, 29, 30, 50, and 66 have been cancelled.

Objections to Claims

Claims 30, 50, and 66 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but were deemed allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. See September 14, 2010 Office action at page 16. Applicants have amended the claims 22, 35, and 51 to include the limitations of objected to claims 30, 50, and 66, respectively, including the limitations of any respective intervening claims, and have cancelled claims 27, 29, 30, 50, and 66, solely to expedite the Application towards issuance. Applicants respectfully submit that the amendments to claims 22, 35, and 51 render those claims, and any claims that depend therefrom, allowable. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the objection to claims 30, 50, and 66 be withdrawn.

Rejections of Claims

Claims 22, 25-28, 31, 32, and 34 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Kennedy III, et al. (US 5,734,981, "Kennedy") in view of Sherif (US 5,459,722). Claims 23, 24, 29, and 33 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Kennedy in view of Sherif, in further view of Henley, et al. (US 5,526,353, "Henley"). Claims 35, 38-41, 44-47, 51, 54-57, and 60-63 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Kennedy in view of Sherif. Claims 36, 37, 42, 43, 48, 49, 52, 53, 58, 59, 64, and 65 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Kennedy in view of Sherif, and further in view of Henley. Claims 67-69 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Kennedy in view of Sherif, and further in view of Bates, *et al.* (US 5,239,577, "Bates").

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections. Notwithstanding, Applicants have amended claims 22, 35, and 51 as shown and discussed above, making those claims, and any claims that depend therefrom, allowable, to expedite the Application towards issuance. Applicants respectfully submit that these amendments render the rejections of the instant Office action moot.

Conclusion

In general, the Office Action makes various statements regarding the claims and the cited references that are now moot in light of the above. Thus, the Applicants will not address such statements at the present time. However, Applicants expressly reserve the right to challenge such statements in the future should the need arise (e.g., if such statements should become relevant by appearing in a rejection of any current or future claim).

Applicants believe that all of pending claims 22-26, 28, 31-49, 51-65, and 67-69 are in condition for allowance, and respectfully solicit a Notice of Allowance.

Applicants respectfully request a telephone conference with the Examiner at the number shown below if there are any questions with respect to this response or the Application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees required by this submission to the Deposit Account of McAndrews, Held & Malloy, Ltd., Account No. 13-0017.

Respectfully submitted,

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